

Message Text

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PAGE 01 ANKARA 03584 101233Z

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ACTION EUR-25

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O R 101138Z MAY 74

FM AMEMBASSY ANKARA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4028

INFO USMISSION GENEVA

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMCONSUL ADANA

AMCONSUL ISTANBUL

AMCONSUL IZMIR

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SNAR TU

SUBJ: PRIMIN ECEVIT'S STATEMENT ON OPIUM QUESTION

REF: (A) ANKARA 3507 (NOTAL); (B) FBIS KYRENIA 091859Z (NOTAL)

1. PRIMIN BULENT ECEVIT, IN A STATEMENT TO GERMAN TELEVISION WHICH WAS RELEASED TO PRESS HERE BY HIS OFFICE ON MAY 9, STATED THAT TURK PUBLIC OPINION AND ALL POLITICAL PARTIES ARE UNITED ON NECESSITY OF CHANGING DECISION TO BAN OPIUM PRODUCTION. ECEVIT DESPITE OUR DENIAL CONVEYED ON MAY 8 TO MFA SEC GEN EREZ (REF A)- AND PUBLISHED MOST PAPERS MAY 9 MORNING - SAID THAT US IS CONTEMPLATING PRODUCTION OF POPPIES ON ITS OWN SOIL.

2. EMBASSY TRANSLATION FOLLOWS:

QUOTE IN CERTAIN REGIONS OF THE COUNTRY, THE FARMERS NEED THE LEGITIMATE INCOME, IN ORDER TO MAINTAIN THEIR LIVING, WHICH

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PAGE 02 ANKARA 03584 101233Z

IS DERIVED FROM OPIUM POPPY CULTIVATION AND IN ADDITION TO THIS,

THEY DEPEND ON CERTAIN SIDE PRODUCTS THEY OBTAIN FROM THE OPIUM POPPY. TURKISH PUBLIC OPINION AND ALL POLITICAL PARTIES IN TURKEY ARE UNITED ON THE NECESSITY OF CHANGING THE DECISION, HASTILY TAKEN BY A CARETAKER GOVERNMENT SOME TIME AGO, BANNING THE CULTIVATION OF OPIUM POPPY. WE ARE, HOWEVER, AWARE OF THE DANGERS OF MISUSE OF THE OPIUM POPPY AND WE ARE VERY SENSITIVE ON THIS ISSUE. WE ARE PREPARED AND WILLING TO TAKE ALL THE PREVENTIVE MEASURES THAT WE CAN THINK OF AND ALL SUCH MEASURES WHICH OUR FRIENDS IN THE INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS MAY RECOMMEND. WE ARE DETERMINED TO TAKE EVERY MEASURE TO PREVENT TRAFFICKING IN OPIUM FOR HARMFUL PURPOSES.

QUOTE THE WORLD PRESENTLY IS IN NEED OF A CERTAIN AMOUNT OF OPIUM POPPY CULTIVATION TO BE USED IN THE PHARMACEUTICALS MANUFACTURING FOR MEDICAL PURPOSES. THESE INDUSTRIES HAVE FELT THE SHORTAGE RESULTING FROM THE BAN IN TURKEY. SERIOUS SHORTAGES ARE BEING PUBLISHED IN THE PRESS THAT AMERICA ITSELF IS CONTEMPLATING THE GRANTING OF PERMISSION FOR OPIUM POPPY CULTIVATION ON ITS SOIL TO FILL THE SHORTAGE CAUSED BY THE DECISION TO BAN CULTIVATION IN TURKEY. FOR THIS REASON, WHILE THE UNITED STATES IS NOW PLANNING GIVING PERMISSION TO GROW THE OPIUM POPPY ON ITS OWN SOIL, IT WOULD BE AN UNTHINKABLE AND UNACCEPTABLE SITUATION FOR THE UNITED STATES TO EXERT PRESSURE ON TURKEY TO RENOUNCE CULTIVATION OF THE OPIUM POPPY. IN ANY CASE, A SITUATION WHERE ONE COUNTRY RESORTS TO EXERTING PRESSURE ON ANOTHER INDEPENDENT COUNTRY ON A SUBJECT SUCH AS WHAT TO GROW OR WHAT NOT TO GROW ON ITS SOIL CANNOT BE ACCEPTED. END QUOTE.

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